

## DNR ARTICLE

### “How Two Different Approaches Impact Recycling in Jefferson County”

The City of Watertown has been a host for Jefferson County Clean Sweeps since 2002. During the last four years under the direction of Rick (Richard) Schultz, Superintendent for the City of Watertown Street Department, the city has become a more active partner. Rick is in charge of the city's waste hauling and recycling. Watertown has been able to get a higher price for their recyclables because its residents know how to properly handle their recyclables. Watertown has always been aggressive in getting its residents to recycle, but Rick was still seeing chemicals, electronics, appliances and drugs being placed in the trash or turning up in the wastewater treatment plant. Rick informed the City's mayor and council members of the problems, and also influenced them to volunteer at a Clean Sweep so they could see firsthand the amounts of chemicals, drugs, and electronics collected at an event. The May 9, 2009 Clean Sweep was a turning point for the City of Watertown. After seeing what the residents were bringing to Clean Sweep events the City Council put \$20,000 in their yearly budget to support the Jefferson County Clean Sweep Program. Rick has set up a permanent electronics recycling site not only for the City of Watertown but for all county residents. He supported the Jefferson County Sheriff's Office, Watertown Police Department and Lake Mills Police Department when they placed permanent drug drop-off sites at their locations. Rick worked with Y's Way Carpeting to get carpet recycled in the City of Watertown. He told residents that the City would no longer accept carpeting in the waste stream; they have to take it to Y's Way for recycling. He has also found a company (LampUSA.com) in Watertown that will take cardboard and Styrofoam and has encouraged his residents and all of Jefferson County to take the cardboard and Styrofoam there for processing and reuse. Watertown also recycles waste oil and oil filters, but no mixed fuels. He also set up a place at the electronics collection site for small appliances without Freon. Again, Rick worked with the private sector to divert small appliances out of the waste stream. Since Watertown has participated in Clean Sweeps, they have diverted a total of 718,556 pounds of hazardous materials from landfills, wastewater treatment plants, ground water and other disposal methods. This is the breakdown of hazardous waste collected:

Household (2002-2011) 94,835 pounds  
Ag (2002-2011) 23,227 pounds  
VSQG (2002-2011) 13,259 pounds  
Electronics (2006-2011) 586,516 pounds  
Non-Controlled Drugs (2007-2011) 680 pounds  
Controlled Drugs (2007-2011) 39 pounds

Rick is in the process of investigating mattress and box spring recycling. He is trying to find a resource that is cost efficient and easy for the residents to use.

The Town of Ixonia has impacted recycling in a different way. Ixonia has a transfer station for their residents and an agreement with the Town of Concord that allows their residents to use the transfer station. The residents can also contract for waste pickup from the private sector and still use the transfer station as needed. The transfer station is managed by Vic

Karaliunas, Recycling Committee Chair. Vic's challenge is to reduce the waste stream and recycle as much as possible with a very limited budget. Because of Ixonia's limited budget they use the "pay- as- you- throw" policy. Examples: \$6 minimum and an additional \$1 per 30 gallon bag of waste materials; \$2 handling fee for electronic waste; \$10 each for mattresses and box springs; \$30 for sofas; \$25 for construction debris per yard; \$65 for spas, etc. Ixonia and Concord residents can bring their iron, steel, glass bottles, plastics #1-#7, tin, bi-metal cans, aluminum cans, cardboard, newspaper, magazines, catalogs, phone books, office paper and non contaminated oil, oil filters, textile & shoes, antifreeze, and batteries for a \$2 site use fee. All of these items are recycled with private recycling companies for revenue to offset landfill costs. Vic also joined the Solid Waste/Air Quality Committee Clean Sweep effort by recycling e-waste at the Ixonia site; all Jefferson County residents can use Ixonia's transfer station for electronics. Since the program's inception in 2010, the total electronics collection at the Ixonia site is 54,975 pounds. Ixonia residents attend the Watertown Clean Sweeps so a percentage of the chemicals and drugs collected are from the Town of Ixonia. The Town of Ixonia donates annually \$350 to the Clean Sweep Program.

Both Rick and Vic apply for the RU (Responsible Unit) grants for their recycling efforts; because of the reduction in the grants they have had to become more creative to maintain existing services. Rick and Vic both agree that to succeed locally you need the support of the County and surrounding communities with private industry. The long term vision is for less waste to be generated with more recycling. The both hope manufacturers will voluntarily take responsibility for product end- of- life or through product stewardship. Another vision is to have obtainable education for Jefferson County residents to include waste reduction, recycling, reuse, rethinking and purchasing products wisely. Both men encourage their residents to use the Clean Sweep Program to dispose of their electronics, chemicals and drugs to prevent pollution of waste streams and ground water. Jefferson County hosts four Clean Sweeps a year at different locations to make access easy for the residents.

For more recycling information on recycling go to the Jefferson County website:

[www.jeffersoncountyi.gov](http://www.jeffersoncountyi.gov)

(Click under Clean Sweep for dates and locations)

### **Rick & Vic Wish List**

1. Continued partnership with the Jefferson County Solid Waste/Air Quality Committee and Clean Sweep Program.
2. Diverting items from the landfill site.
3. Finding local resources for recycling.
4. Achieving county-wide support for better Clean Sweeps, recycling and waste reduction education.
5. Easy and convenient hazardous waste recycling sites or centers.

Without the support of these two men and the communities they represent, our Clean Sweep Program would not be as successful as it is. Because of the electronics collections sites Jefferson County will reach over a million pounds by the end of June. This was achieved since the DNR's e-cycle program began in 2010.